

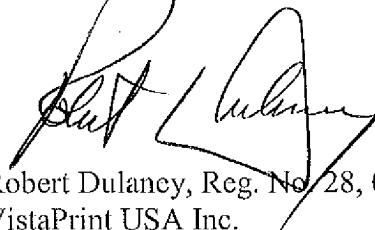
REMARKS

Claims 1-27 were presented for examination. In the Action mailed December 21, 2006, all claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Matthews et al (Publication No. 2004/0139156). A review of the cited Matthews reference shows that substantial portions of Matthews, including portions relied on by the Examiner in rejecting the pending claims, do not constitute prior art in this case.

Applicant's pending application was filed on August 22, 2003. The Matthews application was filed more than two months later on October 31, 2003, as a continuation-in-part of application No. 10/462,417 and application No. 10/462,455, both filed on June 16, 2003. (see Matthews [0001]) Matthews is entitled to priority from earlier filed applications only insofar as material was disclosed in those earlier applications. In this case, the Matthews application filed October 31, 2003 had been substantially expanded from the earlier filings and included a significant amount of new content that was not present in the earlier applications. In particular, the October 31, 2003 Matthews application contained new figures 27-31 and many new paragraphs, including [0016]-[0032] and [0142]-[0214], that are not found in the earlier applications. The Examiner relied extensively on these new paragraphs in rejecting the pending claims.

In view of the fact that much of the Matthews material relied on by the Examiner does not constitute prior art against the pending claims, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejections and issue a favorable action on all claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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